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GEOGRAPHY OF POPULATION CHANGE AND REDISTRIBUTION WITHIN THE POST-FRONTIER GREAT PLAINS

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ABSTRACT—The popular vision of the Great Plains as a region of ongoing population decline is only partly appropriate. In a fundamental transformation of the population geography previously set in the late 19th century, there is an emerging divide between growing metropolitan centers concentrated along the region's periphery and a vast interior struggling to hold its traditional rural population. The size and geographical distribution of population within the Great Plains region is examined over time with the aid of cartographic and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques. Intercensal net migration rates estimated using the vital statistics-based residual method are mapped by county for several decades since 1890 and are tabulated for metropolitan-nonmetropolitan setting and other relevant geographical characteristics. Several subregions within the Great Plains are identified as becoming more culturally diverse due to net immigration or faster natural increase among Hispanic, black, Native American, or Asian culture groups.

KEY WORDS: cultural diversification, geography, Great Plains region, metropolitan transition, net migration, population change

Introduction

Some writers have characterized the Great Plains as a distressed zone of emigration and population decline. Newspaper articles have profiled the plight of farmers forced off the land (Gardner 1998), portrayed young people leaving the area (Rimer 1998), examined the loss of essential services (Wilgoren 2002), or predicted the dissolution of the settlement system of the region (Kristof 2002). Pessimistic academic writings have depicted

the conversion of a declining prairie zone of human depopulation into a so-called buffalo commons (Popper and Popper 1987). Such doomsday scenarios have not gone unchallenged, as other academics have sought to promote a rational rebuttal and reassessment of the region's future potential (De Bres and Guizlo 1992; White 1994).

As we see it, a key issue is that the pessimists' reports may be applicable to some subsections of the Great Plains but are not applicable to others. Indeed, one notable observation that has emerged from our research is that the total population of the entire Great Plains region, as defined in this study, almost exactly doubled between the Great Depression and the beginning of the 21st century, increasing from 9.92 million in 1930 to 19.80 million in 2000 (Table 1). In comparison, the population of the United States as a whole in 2000 was only 2.3 times that in 1930 (US Bureau of the Census *Statistical Abstract*). Thus, contrary to some of the pessimistic hyperbole, the overall change in the population of the entire Great Plains has lagged only slightly behind the pace of population change for the nation.

The purpose of our paper is to develop a clearer picture of geographical differences in the growth and redistribution of the Great Plains population over the decades since the closing of the frontier in 1890. We hope that a greater awareness of these differences would encourage newswriters and others to recognize those sections of the Plains gaining population as well as those losing people. That there are such differences in demographic vitality has of course been recognized by some (e.g., Rathge and Highman 1998), though not fully elaborated. Thus, there remains a need for a more detailed geographical analysis complete with tables and county-level maps.

Geographers and scholars in other disciplines recognize the Great Plains as a distinct region (Mather 1972). Geographers usually see it as a "uniform region," that is, a region relatively homogeneous on the basis of selected criteria (Morrill 1970). The Great Plains region is usually defined primarily on the basis of its physiography as an area with modest local relief, and secondarily on the basis of its grassland natural vegetation and subhumid climate. The western boundary of the Great Plains is obviously delimited by the Rocky Mountains, but the eastern boundary is more arbitrary. Still, there is a general consensus that the eastern limit falls roughly between 94° and 96° west longitude, that is, near the eastern borders of the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas (Haggett 1972). The eastern boundary through Oklahoma and Texas is more problematic. For the purposes of our research, we have chosen to follow the demarcation employed in the *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains* (Wishart in press). Thus delineated, the Great Plains spans 593 counties in 10 states (Fig. 1). To facilitate visual compari-

TABLE 1
GREAT PLAINS STUDY REGION POPULATION, 1890-2000 (IN THOUSANDS)

Area (Number of counties)	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Total Plains (n=593)	4,151	5,132	7,576	8,730	9,920	9,789	10,815	12,623	13,594	15,563	17,096	19,804
Northern Plains (391)	3,314	3,698	4,793	5,537	5,799	5,606	5,920	6,724	7,067	7,739	8,050	9,119
Southern Plains (202)	836	1,434	2,783	3,194	4,121	4,184	4,895	5,899	6,528	7,824	9,046	10,685
Metropolitan (63)	1,210	1,524	2,263	2,884	3,668	3,939	5,139	6,997	8,253	9,867	11,557	14,010
Nonmetropolitan (530)	2,941	3,608	5,313	5,846	6,252	5,851	5,677	5,626	5,342	5,697	5,539	5,794
Nonmetro-Adjacent (165)	1,105	1,409	2,032	2,134	2,345	2,231	2,126	2,079	1,989	2,197	2,180	2,369
Nonmetro-Nonadjacent (365)	1,835	2,199	3,280	3,713	3,907	3,620	3,551	3,548	3,352	3,499	3,360	3,424
Nonmetro-Nonadjacent (>25km Interstate) (231)	1,037	1,246	1,961	2,127	2,306	2,125	2,068	2,052	1,905	1,963	1,863	1,878
NonMetro-Nonadjacent (<25km Interstate) (134)	798	953	1,320	1,585	1,601	1,495	1,483	1,496	1,448	1,536	1,497	1,546

Data source: Calculated using county-level data from US Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Population*, and Forstall (1996).

sons between maps, the border of the Great Plains study region is outlined on every map. The maps presented in our study also show demographic patterns for a larger enclosing region, which we call the Midlands, in order to provide a framework for comparing population trends in the Great Plains study region with those in adjacent areas.

Methods

To undertake a geographic analysis of population change and redistribution, we obtained county-level population data from the US Bureau of the Census for each of the 12 census years from 1890 through 2000 (US Bureau of the Census *Census of Population*; Forstall 1996). Excepting a few as yet unformed counties early in the study period, data were collected for up to 1,264 counties within the Great Plains or the larger Midlands area. Data values for all counties within the broader Midlands are represented on the accompanying maps, but the accompanying tables are restricted to the smaller area of the Great Plains study region.

It is worth stating that the population and net migration figures shown in the accompanying tables for each census year from 1890 to 2000 were calculated using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques as summations over all counties within the Great Plains study region. Moreover, GIS techniques also were used to derive subtotals for several geographic subdivisions within the Great Plains, including location in the Northern Plains or Southern Plains (defined as north or south of the Kansas-Oklahoma and Colorado-New Mexico borders), metropolitan versus nonmetropolitan status (for all years in terms of the 1999 census designation of metropolitan statistical areas or MSAs), and nonmetropolitan counties adjacent to metro counties versus those not adjacent. Since transport access is likely to be an important determinant of growth in rural settings, we also calculated subtotals for nonmetropolitan-nonadjacent counties whose geographical centroids lie within 25km of an interstate highway versus those whose geographical centroids are more than 25km from an interstate highway.

Net migration summarizes the difference between the number of people moving into an area and those moving out during a specific time period. Net migration will be positive if more people have moved in than out, or negative if more have moved out than in. Total population change also depends upon the balance of births and deaths, so that emigration does not necessarily imply overall population decline, though this is quite likely under modern conditions of relatively low birth and death rates.

The identification of net migration for the Great Plains required the use of demographic numerical estimation techniques at the county level, since a literature search failed to find a suitable source of previous estimates. State-level intercensal net migration estimates are available for states containing the Great Plains (e.g., US Bureau of the Census 1975:93-95). But the boundaries of the Great Plains do not coincide with state boundaries, and there are no reliable methods for partitioning geographically larger-scale net migration figures into fractional values for subareas such as the parts of states that are inside the Great Plains study region (Shryock et al. 1971). Numerical aggregation from smaller to larger scales can be done without unnecessary error (Shryock et al. 1971; Schnell and Monmonier 1983; Smith et al. 2001). But county-level net migration estimates have not been published for most decades of either the 19th or 20th centuries (Smith et al. 2001:129). And even for decades for which county-level estimates have been published for some or all states, comparisons are complicated by differences in methodology or an absence of geographical completeness (e.g., Thorntwaite 1934; US Bureau of the Census 1971).

Failing to find a suitable source of previous estimates, we calculated county-level estimates of 10-year intercensal net migration for each county within the Great Plains for each decade from 1890 to 2000. We used the vital statistics-based residual method, wherein net migration is estimated by subtracting estimated net natural population change from observed total population change between census years (Shryock et al. 1971; Schnell and Monmonier 1983; Smith et al. 2001). The vital statistics-based residual method of net migration estimation requires independent estimates of natural population change due to births and deaths as an intermediate step. Lacking county-level birth and death rates for nearly all of the study period, state-level birth and death rates (US Bureau of the Census *Statistical Abstract*; US Department of Health and Human Services *Vital Statistics*) were used to estimate coefficients for geometric natural population change equations (Shryock et al. 1971) applied to the population of each county at the start of each decade. Unfortunately, vital statistics registration was not universal in the United States until 1933, when Texas, at the southern end of the Great Plains, was the last state to begin officially registering births and deaths (US Bureau of the Census *Statistical Abstract* 1943:104). For decades prior to 1940, national-level vital statistics were used to estimate rates of natural population change when state-level data were unavailable. The observed beginning and ending total population at each decade used in the calculations for each county were from the US *Census of Population* (US Bureau of the Census; Forstall 1996).

The greatest source of error in our net migration estimates is probably in the use of state- or national-level birth and death rates to estimate average rates of natural population change for counties, since county-level differences in rates of natural population change within states are neglected. Unaccounted-for temporal changes in birth and death rates during each decade are also potential sources of error. As a reliability check, county-level net migration estimates that we calculated for the 1990-2000 decade were statistically correlated with comparable but more technically refined county-level estimates for 1990-1999 published by the Bureau of the Census (2000). For the 593 counties in the Great Plains study region, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was +0.845. This comparison suggests that the net migration estimates we calculated for the present study uncover geographical patterns that are very similar to those associated with more sophisticated, though temporally less complete, net migration estimates reported by the Bureau of the Census.

Observations

Agrarian to Metropolitan Transition

In 1890 Great Plains settlement was still predominantly rural and small town, with barely 29% of the population living in counties that later would be classified as metropolitan (MSA) for the 2000 *Census of Population* (US Bureau of the Census). Eleven decades later, in 2000, some 71% of the population lived in MSA counties. Important migration-inducing re-evaluations of locational opportunities within the Great Plains accompanied this great 20th-century agrarian-to-metropolitan transition (Fite 1979; Baltensperger 1987).

The population of the Great Plains expanded from 4.2 million persons in 1890 to 19.8 million in 2000 (Table 1). In the two decades up to 1910 the non-MSA counties with their agrarian environments accounted for much of the Great Plains total population increase. From 1910 to 1930 the non-MSA population continued to expand, but now at a pace behind that of the MSA counties, and the non-MSA population reached an all-time high of 6.3 million in 1930. After 1940 the population found in counties later classed as MSAs began to account for the full margin of total population growth, and in the 1950s the total MSA population surpassed that of the non-MSAs.

Non-MSA counties are frequently divided into two categories: (1) those adjacent to MSA counties (non-MSA or nonmetropolitan adjacent), and thus assumed more likely to see population growth (Fuguitt 1979;

Nickels and Day 1997), and (2) those not adjacent to MSA counties (non-MSA or nonmetropolitan nonadjacent), and thus seen as more isolated and less likely to see growth (Fig. 1). Up until 1920 the non-MSA, nonadjacent counties experienced population growth at a higher rate than did non-MSA, adjacent counties. After 1930 the population levels in both categories of non-MSA counties languished, though after 1970 the adjacent counties fared somewhat better (Table 1).

Many of the non-MSA counties reached their maximum population many decades ago (Fig. 2). Peak populations were recorded in 1900 or earlier in several Plains counties, most notably in Kansas and Nebraska. Much more widespread in all 10 Plains states were peak populations being recorded in the 1910, 1920, or 1930 census. Indeed, of the 593 total Plains counties, 353 (59%) experienced their maximum population seven or more decades ago. Counties that reached their maximum population in 1930 or earlier compose more than half (54%) of the land area of the Great Plains study region. Thus, vast stretches of territory have indeed been the object of demographic concern (Archer 1992).

It is noteworthy that the rural farm population (all persons living on farms in rural areas) in the Great Plains reached nearly 4.0 million in 1930 but declined to 1.7 million in 1960, 891,000 in 1980, and 479,000 in 2000, according to our summations of census values (US Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population*) for counties located within the Great Plains study region. Thus, the farm population of the Great Plains at the beginning of the 21st century was slightly less than one-eighth as large as it had been in 1930.

Today, much of the Great Plains population is concentrated in 63 MSA counties (Table 1). The great majority of these MSAs are on the periphery of the region (Fig. 1), including such large and economically powerful MSAs as Denver, Colorado Springs, San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Kansas City (in part), and Omaha. These MSAs represent one kind of Great Plains, which is highly urban, growing, and economically and culturally diversified. To adopt a 19th-century metaphor, these MSAs serve as coastal ports for "prairie schooners" that trawl a vast inland sea of grass and grain. Only a few MSAs are clearly within the Great Plains, and most of them are comparatively small, such as Bismarck, Rapid City, Odessa-Midland, San Angelo, Abilene, Lubbock, Amarillo, or Lawton.

Geographers, economists, and regional planners often make reference to the "core-periphery model." In this model, growing MSAs serve as core centers dominating the surrounding peripheral areas in most economic and political aspects (Friedman 1972). The concentration of business, innovation, wealth, and employment opportunities in these core centers inevitably

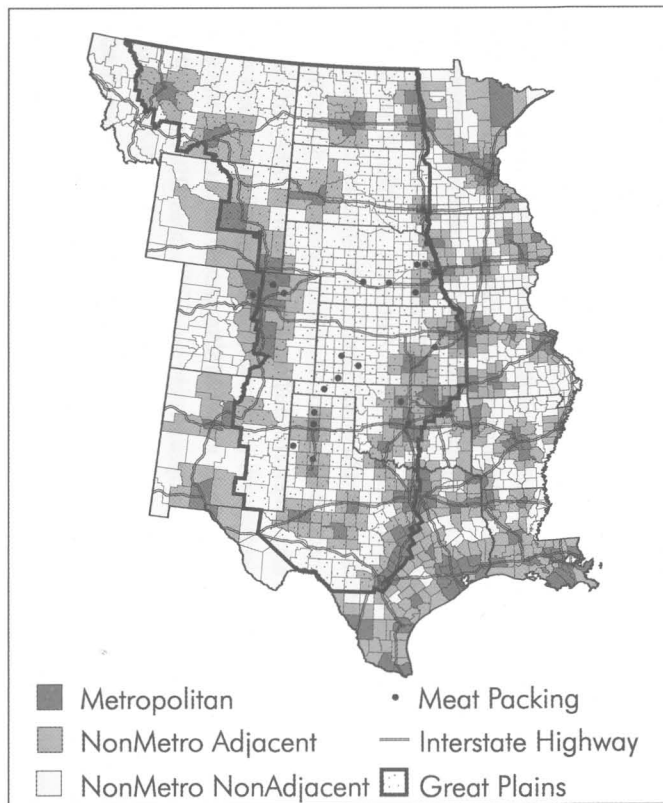


Figure 1. Metropolitan vs. nonmetropolitan status of Great Plains region study area, 2000.

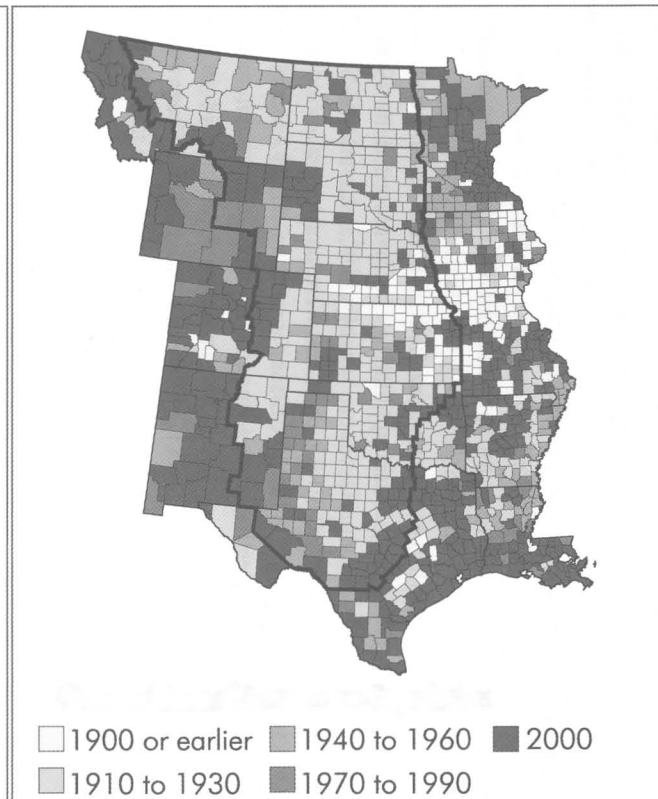


Figure 2. Census year of maximum population.

brings a flow of people, raw materials, and capital from the periphery to the core. This relationship has surely been the case in the Great Plains, but what is quite interesting is the position of all the major MSA core centers along the region's periphery. Thus, the major MSAs serve core functions to both the Great Plains and areas outside the Great Plains. As an anonymous reviewer of this paper cleverly put it, the MSAs along the margins of the Great Plains serve "as hinges between the region's agricultural center and the rest of the nation."

Net Migration of Population

County-level intercensal net migration estimates for the Great Plains region are summarized by decade from 1890 to 2000 (Table 2). Table entries show net migration for all or various subclasses of the 593 counties composing the Great Plains. These subdivisions differentiate MSA and non-MSA status, as well as position in the Northern or Southern Plains. The Plains as a whole experienced net immigration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, net emigration during the middle of the 20th century, and net immigration during the last three decades of the 20th century. However, there were important variations within the region, which can be noted from the divergent experiences of different categories of counties within Table 2, as well as from inspection of selected migration maps. Length restrictions preclude the display of net migration maps for each decade from 1890 to 2000, though such maps were prepared as part of the overall study and have guided our discussion as well as our selection of especially revealing maps for presentation.

The spatial patterns of net migration during the late 19th and early 20th centuries showed a good measure of fluctuation. In the 1890s migration rates were extremely positive in some areas, with 5% or greater annual gains common in North Dakota, Montana, west Texas, and portions of Oklahoma and South Dakota. This reflected the widespread initial settlement of lands by nonindigenous peoples. In sharp contrast, drought in the 1890s resulted in strong emigration in the Northern Plains (Table 2). In the 1900-1910 decade, migration patterns were dramatically split along an irregular north-south line, with high immigration rates to the west and strong emigration the rule in eastern portions of the study region (Fig. 3). Between 1910 and 1920 migration rates were mostly negative, with positive rates common only along the western margin close to the Rocky Mountains. The 1920s saw high positive rates in west Texas and adjoining New Mexico,

TABLE 2
GREAT PLAINS STUDY REGION INTERCENSAL NET MIGRATION, 1890-2000 (IN THOUSANDS)

Area (Number of counties)	1890-1900	1900-1910	1910-1920	1920-1930	1930-1940	1940-1950	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
Total Plains (n=593)	250	1,606	-103	16	-1,359	-421	-86	-709	601	55	1,322
Northern Plains (391)	-200	491	-52	-483	-791	-418	-175	-482	31	-347	540
Southern Plains (202)	450	1,114	-51	498	-568	-3	89	-227	570	403	782
Metropolitan (63)	101	490	246	396	-217	611	960	314	759	722	1,462
Nonmetropolitan (530)	149	1,116	-348	-380	-1,142	-1,033	-1,046	-1,022	-158	-667	-141
Nonmetro-Adjacent (165)	109	393	-236	-75	-408	-437	-415	-359	15	-216	29
Nonmetro-Nonadjacent (365)	40	723	-112	-305	-734	-595	-631	-663	-173	-450	-169
Nonmetro-Nonadjacent (>25km Interstate) (231)	27	511	-159	-108	-445	-367	-386	-423	-125	-275	-114
NonMetro-Nonadjacent (<25km Interstate) (134)	14	211	47	-197	-289	-228	-245	-240	-48	-175	-55

Data source: Calculated using county-, state-, and national-level data from US Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Population*; Forstall (1996); and US Department of Health and Human Services, *Vital Statistics*.

thanks mainly to oilfield development and the spread of cotton farming (Nickels and Day 1997), and in the now fixed set of emerging metropolitan centers around the periphery of the Great Plains.

It is hard to say that 1930 ushered in a new era in migration, because net emigration had been common in agriculturally dependent counties for some time. But the severity of the depression and drought in the 1930s turned the whole of the Great Plains into a sea of counties with net migration losses, including even some of the larger urban centers on the periphery (Fig. 4). In the 1940s rural emigration was further encouraged by the availability of jobs in wartime factories in nearby urban centers or in other regions of the nation (Beale 1978). The 1950s and 1960s saw little change in migration behavior, as many MSA counties near the periphery of the Plains experienced ongoing growth, particularly in Colorado and Texas, while the vast majority of non-MSA counties saw ongoing negative migration.

The 1970s brought some relief from rural population loss (Table 2; Fig. 5). The nation as a whole experienced a “nonmetropolitan population turnaround” wherein positive migration rates became common in many non-MSA areas of the nation (Beale 1977). This was the result of a growing anti-big-city bias (Hansen 1970) and the decentralization of many branch manufacturing facilities to smaller communities to tap nonunion, lower-wage labor resources (Lonsdale 1981). This trend has continued to the present day in both the Northern and Southern Plains, particularly in those counties that have meat-processing plants (Lonsdale and Archer 1995; Brown 1993) and/or a location along one of the new interstate highways (Table 2; Kilborn 2001). The 1980s were difficult years for farmers, and most non-MSA counties experienced negative migration rates. The 1990s saw a return to the spatial pattern of net migration quite similar to that of the 1970s, with an increasingly sharp division between growing metropolitan centers located along the periphery of the Great Plains, and a vast interior struggling to retain its traditional rural population (Table 2; Fig. 6).

Cultural Diversification

In more recent years the population of the Great Plains has become increasingly diversified by growing numbers of minority peoples. Four such groups are here noted: Hispanics, black Americans, Native Americans, and Asians (including Pacific Islanders). Because of changes in census definitions, it is difficult to trace precisely growth patterns of several groups

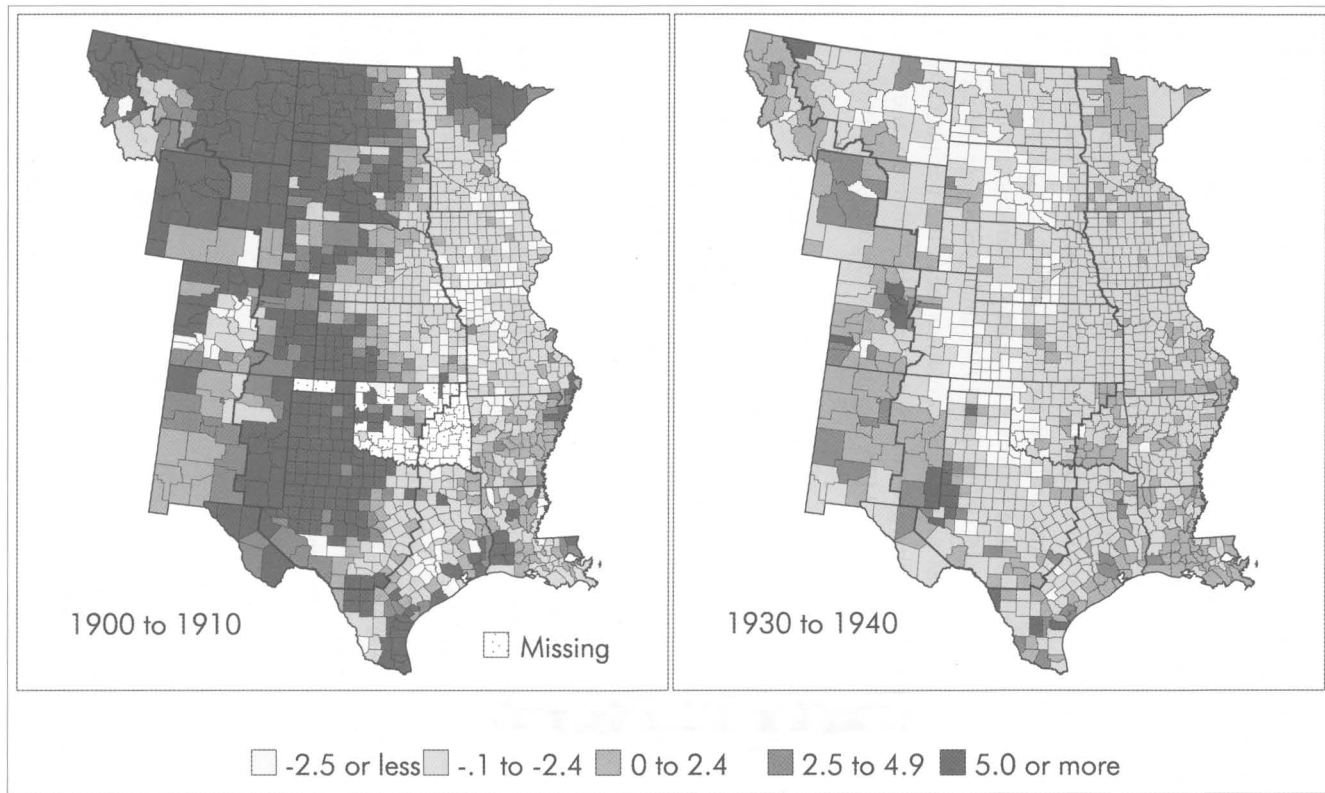


Figure 3. Net migration (average annual percentage), 1900 to 1910. Figure 4. Net migration (average annual percentage), 1930 to 1940.

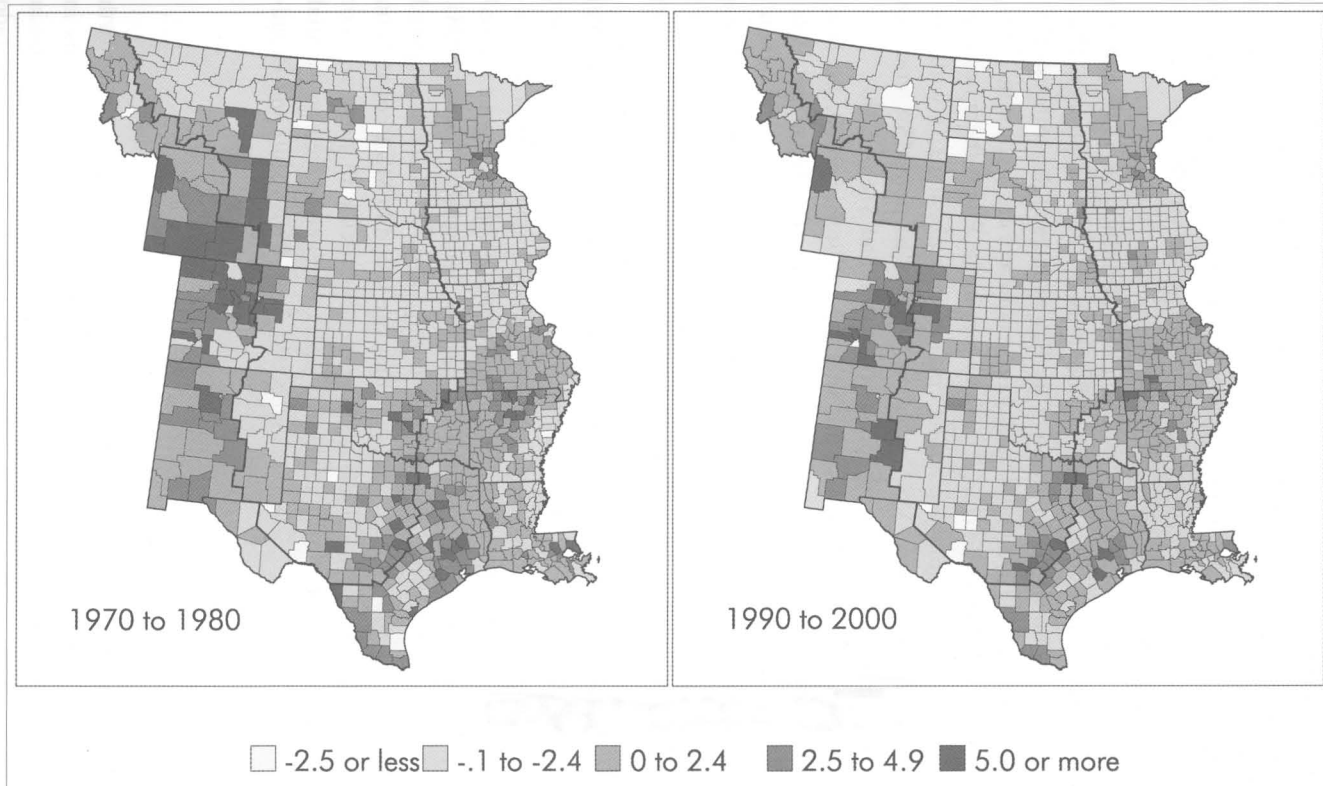


Figure 5. Net migration (average annual percentage), 1970 to 1980. Figure 6. Net migration (average annual percentage), 1990 to 2000.

prior to 1980. Between 1980 and 2000 the four groups combined increased in number from 2.7 to 5.3 million within the Great Plains study region, a 95% gain. By contrast, the remaining Great Plains population, largely white non-Hispanic, increased only 13% during the same period. Furthermore, it is widely believed that the census figures on minorities constitute a substantial undercount (Martin and Widgren 2002).

Hispanics, with a Plains population of 1.6 million in 1980 and 3.3 million in 2000, are by far the most numerous of the four groups. Their presence in the southwestern portion of the Plains dates to the 16th and 17th centuries (Rochín 2000), and to this day their numbers are highest in Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado (Fig. 7). Elsewhere in the Plains there has been an upsurge in the Hispanic population commencing about 1970, with substantial migration to most MSA areas as well as to non-MSA counties containing large meat-processing plants (Gouveia and Saenz 2000).

The black American population was 1.2 million in 2000, up from 820,000 in 1980, and is most heavily concentrated in the Texas and Oklahoma portion of the Plains near the western margin of the old "cotton belt" (Fig. 8). While there has long been a small black population elsewhere in the Plains, their numbers began increasing in the 1940s and thereafter as many left the Old South and migrated to MSA centers elsewhere in the nation (Aiken 1998).

The Native American population in the Plains expanded from 241,000 in 1980 to 410,000 in 2000, mainly because of natural increase. Their numbers are greatest in Oklahoma and in or near the many Indian reservations largely in the Northern Plains. Native Americans have shown a marked reluctance to migrate away from their traditional home areas (Lewis 1998).

The Asian population is small but growing, 359,000 in 2000 compared with 102,000 in 1980. For the most part they are found in MSA counties on or near the periphery of the Plains, and in other counties with universities or those with meat-processing plants. The latter have employed substantial numbers of Vietnamese immigrants since the late 1970s (Stull and Broadway 1990).

Discussion

There are reasons for being optimistic about ongoing population growth in the Great Plains. This optimism is conditioned on continued gains in MSA counties along the periphery of the Plains as well as MSA counties in the interior, particularly those in Texas along Interstate 35 and Colorado

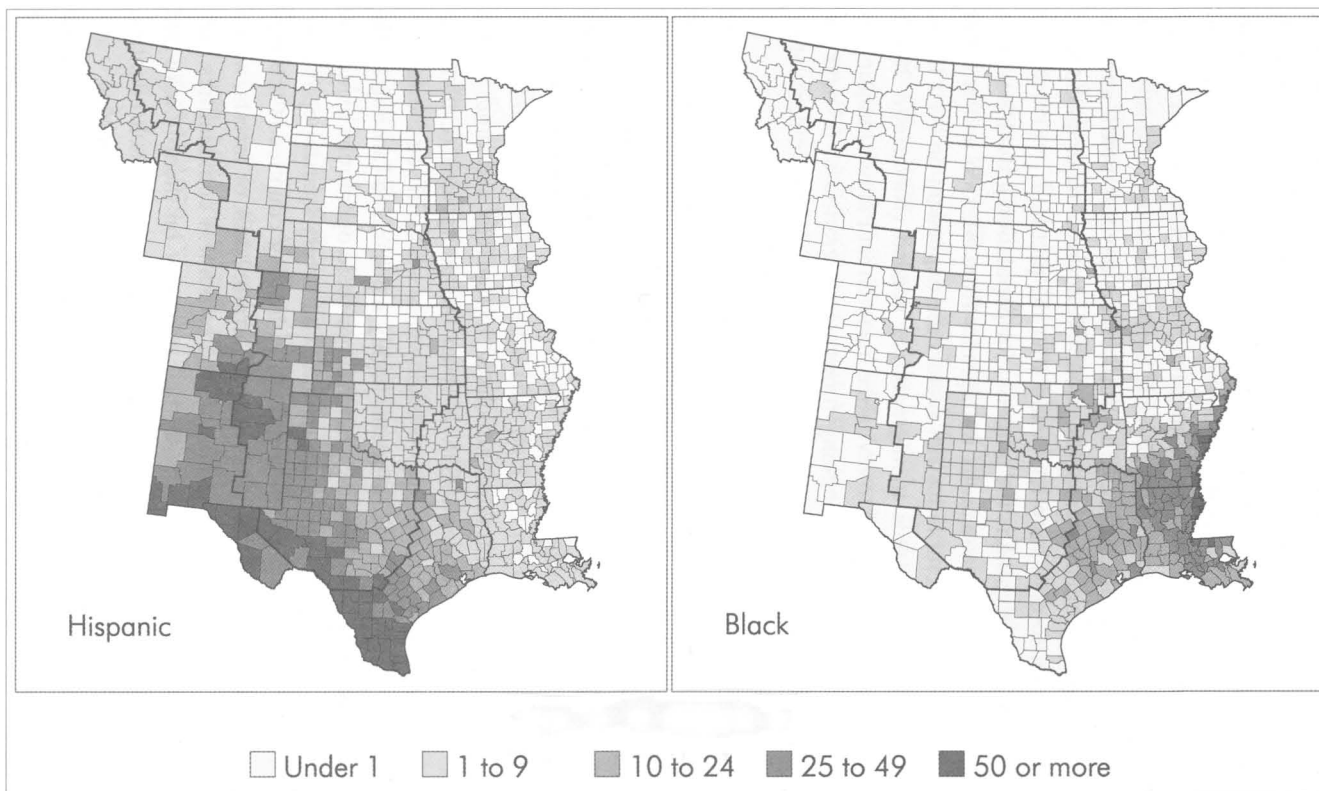


Figure 7. Percentage of Hispanic population, 2000.

Figure 8. Percentage of black population, 2000.

along Interstate 25. The population gap between the MSA and non-MSA counties will very likely widen, with the non-MSA population likely holding steady or perhaps continuing to decline for the Great Plains as a whole. Non-MSA counties with the best chance to grow are those that are adjacent to MSA counties, that are located along interstate highways, that contain large meat-processing or other large-scale agribusiness operations, or that possess recreational amenities. But unforeseen developments such as drought, declining groundwater tables, economic depression, or unexpected competition from foreign suppliers could alter the picture.

Particularly intriguing is the potential for population growth based on the continued arrival of numerous immigrants from Mexico and/or other Hispanic countries. Several industrial sectors are dependent on their labor, and with labor turnover new immigrants are needed (Navarrette 2002). These immigrants have helped to revitalize many Great Plains communities (Gouveia and Saenz 2000). Ongoing foreign immigration at or near the rapid 1990-2000 pace would exert a substantial impact on future population size and characteristics within the Great Plains.

There are also reasons for being pessimistic about population levels in that large set of interior non-MSA counties where the maximum population was achieved many decades ago (Fig. 2) and where no revival of growth has occurred since 1970 (Figs. 5 and 6). This embraces about half the territory of the Great Plains and includes counties in all states. Presumably these are the places the Poppers had in mind when they introduced the "buffalo commons" concept wherein the land would be taken out of farming and become part of a vast grassland populated by buffalo and other native wildlife (Popper and Popper 1987). It is an intriguing idea (Callenbach 1996), but one that is unappealing to landowners who still see the land as productive for wheat or cattle. Modern, highly mechanized farming methods make it possible to cultivate or ranch large-scale operations using few farm workers, leaving the rural countryside with a very sparse population.

Another barrier to population growth in lagging counties is the perceived absence of amenities, such as rugged terrain, lakes, or forests, which are attractive to tourism, second homes, and retirement communities. Regions with such attributes often base their economy on them (Cloke and Park 1985). Unfortunately, within the Plains there are few such counties, mostly in Texas, the Black Hills, and close to the Rocky Mountains.

Finally, much of the Great Plains' interior suffers from a poor public image and is seen as a place with widespread demographic decline (White 1994). This will likely continue, as the "dust bowl" reputation has proven to be very enduring (Riebsame 1986).

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Call for Papers

Special Edition of *Great Plains Research*
Fall 2004, volume 14, number 2

New Immigrants in the Great Plains: Strengths and Challenges

Guest Editors:

John Defrain, Ph.D., Rochelle L. Dalla, Ph.D.,
Douglas A. Abbott, Ph.D., and Julie Johnson, Ph.D.

Editorial Assistants:

Sheran Cramer, Ph.D., Gloria Gonzalez-Kruger, Ph.D., and Yan Xia, Ph.D.

The Great Plains* have been significantly enriched by newcomers through the millennium. The purpose of this Special Issue is to identify and document strengths and challenges of new immigrants in the Great Plains from a family strengths perspective. New immigrants are defined as those who have immigrated to the Great Plains in the past 30 years and may include: Bosnians, Serbs, Sudanese, Zimbabweans, Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotians, South Asians, Koreans, Japanese, Guatemalans, El Salvadoreans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Chileans, Hondurans, or Costa Ricans.

Strengths and challenges are broadly defined, and manuscript topics may include one or more of the following: psycho-social, educational, dietary and nutritional, emotional, physical, spiritual, cultural, and economic. Other relevant topics may include business practices of culturally diverse employees (e.g., holidays) and small business practices/patterns of financing.

This issue will expand the knowledge base in relation to newcomers in the Great Plains, including individual and collective experiences, providing a balanced portrayal of new immigrants in the Great Plains, defining issues of relevance for policy formation, and providing a broader understanding of populations of new immigrants for educational, service, and outreach efforts.

Interdisciplinary Focus. Manuscript topics are invited from a variety of disciplines including: Family Science, Anthropology, Women's Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Education, Social Work, Communication, Nursing, or other related fields. Manuscripts will be accepted that contribute to the understanding of the Strengths and Challenges of New Immigrants in the Great Plains through a variety of means, including: qualitative research, quantitative research, theoretical or discussion pieces, and personal essays.

Contact **Rochelle L. Dalla** by mail (address listed below), phone (402.554.2356), or email (dalla@unomaha.edu) for questions regarding the appropriateness of a topic or manuscript idea.

Instructions to Authors. All manuscripts should be submitted in triplicate. Manuscripts should be concise: 5,000 words or less including reference section, with up to 4 tables or illustrations; if more graphic material is needed, please reduce total word count by 250 words per illustration. All submissions should be typed double-spaced, including abstract (of no more than 150 words), text, quotations, and bibliography, on 8.5 by 11-inch white bond paper with 1-inch margins. Informational footnotes are not accepted. Figures and tables should not be embedded in the text. Please send photocopies of tables, figures and captions with text for review process. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, author(s) will be asked to send the final document on a 3.5-inch high density IBM-compatible computer diskette in a word processing or text file, and figures as tif or eps files at 350 dpi grayscale or 1200 dpi line illustrations on a 100MB diskette. PowerPoint graphics will not be accepted. For complete guidelines, please see the *Great Plains Research* webpage: <http://www.unl.edu/plains/publications/gprinst.html>.

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* The area stretching westward from the Missouri River at Omaha and Kansas City to the Rocky Mountains, and northward from the Texas Panhandle into the Canadian prairie provinces.

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